

Music Education and National Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of music education in national development. The paper is an empirical study that addresses the impact of music education in national development in Nigeria. Methodology relied solely on the survey of what musicians have said at a point in time. The study used bibliographic, personal oral interviews, survey and field investigation as data collection methods. Data was also collected by listening to albums produced by twenty-six (26) Nigerian musicians. A total of forty three (43) albums were randomly selected cutting across all musical genres in Nigerian musical scene. Literature was reviewed on various concepts/issues that are highlighted in this study center on the impact of music education in national development. The outcome of the study shows the findings on each of the following issues as discussed in this paper: Transmission of Values (35%); Transmission of Culture (23%); Socio-Political Issues (74%); Media System (93%); Social Reconstruction (42%); Political Solidarity (58%); Electoral Campaign (70%); Electronic Media (100%); National Music (23%); Espirit De Corps (12%); Corruption (84%); Communal Clash (70%); Political Office Arrangement(65%); Government Policy (79%); Child Abuse and Women Liberation (47%); Fight for Freedom (40%); Social ill/Social Revolution (95%); and National Integration/Patriotic (88%). The study recommends that Nigerian musicians should be well equipped and versatile with the knowledge of music education so as to move the country forward.

Key Words: Music Education, National Development, Sustenance, Democracy

INTRODUCTION

Music has been essential to man throughout history, and it is equally essential today. Music cannot be separated from education, hence, the term music education. Encyclopedia Americana (19, 1974, p. 638) noted that, —music education is the training or studies in music, with a view to impart or acquire music creation and appreciation competencies. It is the training in all aspects of music, and most especially school programmes designed to teach people to make music and to listen to music as preparation for creating own musical culturel.

Music is culture bound. Culture is the whole way of life, which distinguishes a human community from another and by which it can be compared to another. Music education is central in the life of a society, especially like ours, in Nigeria democracy. Democracy according to BBC (1992, p. 300) is a system of government or organization in which the citizens or members choose leaders or make other important decisions by voting. Music education sets up a pattern of rights and wrongs, the dos

and don'ts. It is used to mobilize people or rally them to solidarity. The national music of any people is a rallying point, a marshalling point for expression of solidarity.

Development is a state of being advanced by gradually moving through progressive changes. Development according to Akosu (2006, p. 7) is the conquering and harnessing of natural environment towards moving the nation forward into the good and secure life that man has always sought. Thus, it should lead to the elimination of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The aim of this paper was to examine the role of music education in national development, highlight the various types of music in Nigeria and discuss the impact of music education on the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria and for national development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study methodology relies solely on the survey of what musicians have said at a point in time. Data was collected from the albums produced by twenty-six (26) Nigerian musicians by listening to them. A total of forty three (43) albums were randomly selected cutting across all musical genres in Nigerian musical scene. A review of literature was done on various concepts/issues that center on the impact of music education in sustenance of democracy in Nigeria for national development.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Music Education Expressed in Different Concepts

Music education for national development is expressed through the following concepts and issues: transmission of values, transmission of culture, socio-political issues, media system, social reconstruction, political solidarity, electoral campaign, electronic media, national music, spirit de corps, corruption, communal clashes, political officer arrangement, government policy, child abuse and women liberation, fight for freedom/anti apartheid crusade, social ills and social revolution, national interaction/patriotic songs and Islam, religion and music education.

Type of Music in Nigeria

Folk or Traditional Music. Music found in Nigeria can broadly be placed in three categories or classifications. The first, and by far the oldest and most widespread, is folk or traditional music with their associated dances, where they are deemed appropriate. Of the many definitions of folk music which have from time to time been put forward, the most satisfactory is probably that which was adopted by the International Folk Music Council at its conference at Sao Paulo (Brazil) in 1954. It argues that Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the traditional music are (1) continuity, which links the present with the past; (2) variation, which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group, and (3) selection by the

community, which determines the form, or forms in which the music survives. Karpeles (1973, p. 3) notes that the term can be applied to music that has been evolved from rudimentary beginning by a community uninfluenced by popular or art music and it can likewise be applied to music which has originated with an individual composer and has subsequently been absorbed into the unwritten living tradition of a community which gives it its folk character.

Music is, of course, a cultural expression and every culture decides for itself what is music or not. According to Merriam (1964, p. 20) and Blacking (1976, p. 15), one social characteristic of folk music is that it is functional-integral with life and the rhythms of life. The anthropological works by Meek (1925, p. 6) and Talbot (1976, p. 10) show that Nigeria has at least 250 languages, which express or define their various environments as ethnic groups - little worlds in themselves, which are fortunately in contact with other little or bigger worlds. This scenario presents many cultural definitions of music, which express, in aggregate, the diversity and richness of traditional music in Nigeria- the consequence of each ethnic group deciding for itself what it regards as music or dance. Thus Herndon (1976, pp. 222-223) states, —what I may think does not in any way affect another group of people’s ideas about their music. What they think of as music, and how they manipulate and develop those ideas, however, affects the form and substance of that music. Traditional or folk music, as is easily understood, springs from the cultural womb and can develop or grow through the years, mutating, enlarging, shedding, but always maintaining its original gene. As a cultural product, it is also the product of man in his culture and environment. Since it has to do with the cultural gene, it is easily understood why it can also generate such conflicts between conservatives and progressives. In Nigeria, most of the traditional music is found in the rural areas as well as in such situations where the traditional culture operates.

Popular Music. Another categorization of music found in Nigeria is popular music. This is socially related music of the masses or youth used mainly in the urban areas and on the electronic media. It is dance oriented and finds its expression in public places and nightclubs. It is commercially oriented and used mainly for entertainment and expression of emotions and social commentaries. It is sometimes described as acculturated and hybridized music since it takes in ideas from many cultures. The modern communications and transportation systems have had powerful effects on the music of this genre, creating along the line, especially among the youths, the impression that it is the only music worth the while. Many varieties exist in the Nigerian society. Some derive from traditional social music; some are pure importations; while others reflect the interaction between Nigerian or African and other ideas (Okafor, 1988, 1989a, 1998a & b, 2000 & 2005a).

Classical and Neo-Classical Music. In the third category, we can put all art music – Classical and Neo- Classical Music. These are purely non- Nigerian musical expressions that came into the country through Nigeria’s colonial heritage – Western education and Christian Evangelism activities. Western education has exalted it in the minds of the elite and installed it as status symbol, or – an index to sophisticated musical literacy, its spread in the society appears stunted when measured against the investments in its appreciation and usage. It is nevertheless found in its various forms

and used by the elite, who have the power of making decisions by congregations and special —philosophical societies, disciplined organizations, and by the crop of people who have passed through music schools. As a cultural import to the country, it brings with it the cultures, technologies, techniques and thought tracks that are foreign to Nigeria. It is on the whole a minority, though important music.

Music Education and Transmission of Values

One of the most important uses of music is to transfer social values or morals. Parents in the olden days used folktales and didactic songs to transmit moral lessons to the young ones. Even in adult life, people were interested in what the musician said. The musician of any community poured out some of the values of the people. They provided quotes and even reference material. They gave the sign posts, which guided the people on their pilgrimage of life. Such values, transmitted through music, often stick and pass from generation to generation, and enter into the group unconsciously but always producing the required results. Music education provided its own hypnosis in the teaching of very many lessons. Ajewole (2004, p. 12) remarks that it removes the pains while strengthening the bones and the flesh of the lessons. Ten musicians, including Tunji Oyelana, Zeal Onyia, Anike Ejeagha and Oyesiku released fifteen albums, of which, 35%, were on the uses of music to transfer social values. The track *Oro Re O* by Oyesiku illustrates this better.

Music Education and Transmission of Culture

Music education is a very important element in the transmission of culture. Music features in festival and in ceremonies which are ancient in origin. As long as music is used in those ceremonies, the whole old culture/norms are passed down from one generation to another. And so, music education becomes a vital instrument for the transmission and continuity of the culture. Eight musicians like Morocco Maduka, Nelly Unchedu, Araba etc, sang songs found in 10 albums (23%) on transmission of culture. *Potopoto* track by Araba gives a better picture on this concept.

Music Education and Social-Political Issues

Politics is the authoritative distribution of power and resources in a democracy. And so, social-political issues will be social factors or social matter that may impinge on political matter and political matter that, themselves, impinge on the same social factors. And so, what would the socio-political issues in Nigeria be? They are issues we debate; we discuss and argue about as part of our daily lives. Perhaps, we could rate the following as some socio-political issues in Nigeria which are always expressed with music including control of resources, ethnicity, poverty, nepotism, occupation, bribery, equities, i.e. balanced distribution of resources, and politics itself in terms of who enters it and how to get out of it. Twenty among the selected musicians released 32 albums (74%) on various political issues. Popular among them were Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Sunny Okosun, Ebenezer Obey, Hubert Ogunde and Christ Essien Igbokwe. The following track illustrates better, *‘ITT’*, *‘Cop N Quench’*, *‘Holy War’*, *‘Austerity Measure’*, etc.

Media System

Music is a system of communication. The musical system of a society constitutes itself into a media system. 'The Media', as we know, is very powerful in a democracy. It has been defined by some as 'the oxygen of democracy'; that is why the press is often called the watchdog of society. We find that music plays the same role as the press. Okafor (2002, p. 11) notes that the musical system of a country; the ways in which people produce their music and the contents of the music are all a part of their social system.

Looking at the works of some musicians at the time Nigeria was preparing for independence and many other things were happening in the society, a high-life musician raised his voice and asked important questions. Can this self- government of independence of Nigeria be done? Is it feasible? Then he began to enumerate some of the things he did not consider good in the society and laced everything in the hand of providence.

The great Nigerian social critic and musician, Fela Anikulapo Kuti was well-known for the way he used music to turn his attention to some of the things he considered unsavory in the society. These included, to name but a few; abuse/arrogance of power, the question of ethnicity, oppression, international corruption, misuse of public resources, and grabbing of power as the military did. These are some of the things which he sang about. He used his music to turn to some of the social issues in the country. These are matters that are discussed in the realms of politics and the realms of society. But, Fela turned them into music, so that even little children could dance to —Zombiel and recite 'Zombie' and get to know what the contents really meant. Such sentiments are also expressed in many of the songs such as VIP, ITT, Stalemate, Yellow Fever, and Army Arrangement, Unlimited Liability Company and *Etike Revo Wetin?* Lyric by Wole Soyinka and musical performance by Tunji Oyelana and his Benders contain classics of social comment which are still relevant 20 years later.

Other musicians like Sonny Okosun, Ebenezer Obey, Lagbaja (the masked musician), Zeal Onyia, Onyeka Onwenu, Mike Ejeagha, Nelly Unchedu, King Sunny Ade, Sir Shina Peters, Oliver de Coque, Chief Stephen Osadebe, Morocco Maduka and Celestine Ukwu among others, have also contributed songs which were not merely critical but directing people at which course to go. These are the types of songs that have been used in National programmes like the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Election Campaigns, Registration of Voters, Health Campaigns like the immunization programmes, the War Against Aids and the War Against Indiscipline (WAI). These are areas in which music/musicians through the knowledge of music education have contributed to the sustenance of democracy which help national development in Nigeria. 40 albums (93%) were released by these musicians, using music as a system of communication to sustain democracy in Nigeria societies.

Music Education and Social Reconstruction

The use of music and knowledge of music education in social reconstruction and in character formation is not new. Aristotle declared that music should be used in

moulding character; for the formation of character among the youths for that matter. He found that certain types of music are good for those who want to be military people but certain types are better for those whose characters are going to be formed toward intellectualism in terms of the arts, poetry and in terms of leading the society. For that matter, the Greeks did not take their music as play matter. Those who transgressed on the norms of the society in relation to music were grandly ostracized according to Harman and Metters, (1962:40). So, the value the society placed on music will determine the value the student of music education will place on himself. Nine (9) Nigeria musicians, including Jaigbade Alao, Lagbaja, Ayinla Kollington, Celestine Ukwu among others, released 18 albums (42%) using music as a social reconstruction. ‘Mass Mobilization’ track by Ayinla Kollington is one of the good examples.

Political Solidarity through Music Education

In Africa, one cannot talk of the traditional political system without the place of music education. Music therefore occupies a very important place at the courts of African kings. Similarly, one can remember that during the Nigeria Civil War, different songs were composed to communicate the feelings of the people at various ends. There was one record waxed in praise and support of ‘Gowon’. It goes thus, —what is the meaning of ‘Gowon’?! ‘Go on with one Nigeria, again, Go on with one Nigeria-Major General Yakubu Gowon, we civilians of Nigeria thank your Government for keeping to be one’. On the Biafran side their song was:

We are Biafran fighting for our Nation
In the Name of Jesus, we shall conquer.

Eighteen (18) musicians randomly selected released 25 albums (50%) to communicate the feelings of the people. On the political situation, prominent among them are Hubert Ogunde, Ayinla Kollington, Salawa Abeni, Funmi Adams and Evi Edna Ogolis. The tracks, ‘Yoruba Ronu’, ‘Oro Oselu Nigeria’, ‘All we Need is Love’, give better knowledge of this concept.

Music Education and Electoral Campaign

Music and music education is used to gather people for either political rally or electoral campaign. Abiodun (2003, p. 10) remarks that all political parties in Nigeria have songs which are heavily worded to get the support of admirers. NPP had this song as their party song:

NNP Nigeria people’s party (3 times)
NNP we are the people choice
Power, power, power to the people
Progress, progress, progress for our Nation
NPP we are the people’s choice

These political songs helped the political leaders to gain the support and popularity as the message sunk deep into the electorates’ ears. Bebey (1973, p. 42) points out that

no electoral campaign is completed without the active support of music. He made reference to the 1960 elections where 22 (78rpm) records were waxed within the period in Western Nigeria. Twenty musicians (20) released 30 albums (70%) using the knowledge of music education for electoral campaigns. The track ‘_Otito Koro’, ‘_Aye’, by Ogunde and King Sunny Ade ‘_The Way Forward’ (*Nigeria yi ti gbogbo wa ni*) are good illustration of this electoral campaign issue.

Music Education and Electronic Media

Radio and television media make very good use of music in their broadcasts either for advertisement or entertainments. 100% of Nigerian musicians want their music to be played on electronic media for recognition and popularity. Obey’s track ‘_Operation Feed the Nation’, ‘_Go on with one Nigeria’ and ‘_Better Life for Women’ are used for advertisement and entertainment.

National Music

Many countries used their National Anthem to establish the ethos of their countries. For example; Britain-

Grant her victorious, long to reign over us. Frustrate her enemies,
confound their politics; France- shall hateful tyrants, mischief
making affright and desolates the land, while peace and liberty lie
bleeding? To arms ye brave, march on , march on, All hearts
resolved on victory or death; America- Does the star spangled
banner still wave o’er the land of the brave and the land of the frees,
and Nigeria- The labours of our heroes past shall never be in
vain.... One nation bound in freedom, peace and unity.

Within narrower confines, political, social, economic and self-interest groups always use music to rally round and to express their feelings, to mobilize their members and to generate sympathy and activity in the society. Fourteen (14) musicians released 10 albums (23%), using music to mobilize the members of the society. Among them are Bunmi Olajubu, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Ebenezer Obey and King Sunny Ade. ‘_Save Nigeria Today’, ‘_who no know go know’, ‘Fire in ‘_Sowento’ are good illustrations.

Espirit De Corps

Anybody who watches soldiers or police men on parade marching to music by the brass band or people going to war and singing their war songs takes note that music tends to provide ‘_esprit de corp’, group solidarity, something that people rally around. During the Nigeria Biafran War (1967-1970), one of the products of that tragedy was a huge volume of songs, which were spontaneously composed but which buoyed up hope and drove people into action. They consoled, gave hope, banished fears and provided confidence and faith. Notable are eight (8) musicians who released 56 albums (12%) using music to console and elevate fears. Among them are Sunny Okosun, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, I. K. Dairo, Oyesiku and Bunmi Olajubu among others. ‘_Stop the War’, ‘_Give peace a chance’ give better illustrations.

Corruption

Many of the Nigerian musicians are sensitive to all that goes on in their country. Comments are made in form of appraisal, questioning, persuasion, condemning, appealing and warning. Popular among the musicians who sang songs condemning the act of corruption and looting of national treasury was Fela Anikulapo Kuti's album *'ITT'* in which he condemned the N2.8 billion missing money between Abiola (I.T.T. Contractor) and Obasanjo the then Head of State. I.T.T. originally means International Telephone Telecommunication but in Fela's album, it was used to mean international thief- thief. 36 albums (83%) were centered on corruption activities in Nigeria's setting.

Communal Clash

Evi-Edna Ogolis album- *'The World one Kilometer'*, where she talked about *'Nation Fighting Others'*. Okosun's album- *'Give peace a chance'*, *'Stop the War'*, are tendencies of musicians' appeal for peaceful community. 30 albums (70%) revealed the check point of music on communal clashes.

Political Office Arrangement

I. K. Dario's album *'Kasora'* (Let us be careful) released in 1963 was the first to warn Nigerian about Civil-War that eventually broke out as an aftermath of the corruption practices of the 1964 election. Using the Western State experience in the 1964 election, Hubert Ogunde's album *'Otito Koro'*, *'Yoruba Ronu'*, narrated the political wars after the manipulations of the election results which resulted into burning houses; killings etc. He condemned the act and asked Yoruba's to think twice (*Yoruba Ronu*).

Other albums include Okosun's album- *'Power to the people'*, Igbokwe's album- *'Mo loro yi so'*, is a plea for good governance, Ayinla Kollington's album *'Oro Ibo to nbo'*, cautioned the electorates about problems election malpractices could bring. Salawa Abeni's album- *'Oro Oselu Nigeria'*, pleaded to Nigerians not to vote for money but for either SDP or NRC (the two political parties available then). Jaigbade Alao's album- *'President Obasanjo'* traced the political history of Nigeria using a banana plantation to represent Nigeria where everybody was waiting to eat ripe *'Banana'*. He pleaded for fair distribution of the banana. 28 albums (65%) cautioned and exposed political office arrangement.

Government Policy

Ebenezer Obey's album- *'Operation Feed the Nation'* released in 1977 was the first of its kind to talk about government policy. He emphatically warns that farmer's matter should not be taken lightly. Obey's album- *'Austerity Measure'* waxed in 1982 reflected on the economic implication of the policy. He later sang about *'Better Life For Women'* (Babangida's Policy). Kollington's album- *'Mass Mobilization'* was one of the different efforts of Nigerian musicians to join the enlighten campaign on

national development to inform people about government policy. 34 albums (79%) outlined Nigeria's Government policy.

Child Abuse and Women Liberation

Christ Essien Igbokwe's album- 'Hear the Call' and Funmi Adam's album- 'Omode o' are albums that call on children to heed to parents instructions, avoid the use of drugs and cultism among other vices because though they are youth today, they are the hope of tomorrow. On the other hand, Okosun's album- 'African Women Wake Up', talked about women liberation and call for their involvement in socio-political activities. 20 albums (47%) centered on child abuse and women liberation.

Fight for Freedom/ Apartheid Crusade

Okosun's is more popular in this category. His album- 'Papa's Land', 'My People Wake Up', 'Fire in Soweto', 'Holy Wars', are of international repute in the bid to call for freedom in Africa. Christy Essien's album- 'We Ought to Fight for the Unity of our Father' and 'We Ought to fight for the Unity of Africa', are part of the anti-apartheid crusade. 17 albums (40%) call for freedom in Africa.

Social ills and Social Revaluation

Araba and his Rhythm Blues in his album- 'Potopoto' waxed in 1957 warned against prostitutes which today is very relevant to the call 'Beware of AIDS'. Oyesiku and his Rainbow Quintet in his album- 'Oro Re O' released in 1958 warned women to desist from gossiping – a social ill, Ogunde's album- 'Aye', called the drivers to lessen their speed (Onimoto Rora Sare o, onimoto rorani corner yen). Fela's social revolutionary records include 'Yellow fever', 'Who no know go know', 'Trouble Sleep Yanga go Wake am', 'Don't Grag Me', 'Chop N Quench' and 'Unknown Soldier' among others. 41 albums (95%) warned and preached against social ills and social revaluation.

National Integration/ Patriotic Song

Many of the Nigeria's Musicians have said something about the need for the country to unite and work together to move the country forward. They include; Bunmi Olajubu's album- 'Save Nigeria Today', Funmi Adam's album- 'All We Need is Love', 'Ebenezer Obey's album- 'Go on with one Nigeria (Gowon)', 'Christ Essen's album- 'Ife', appeal for unity let's change the system in Nigeria, and Sunny Ade's album- 'The Way Forward' (Nigeria yi ti gbogbo wa ni), was produced by fifteen (15) Nigerian musicians. The album 'The Way Forward', raised some pertinent soul inspiring questions like, 'how long shall we quarrel?', 'How long shall we disagree?', 'When shall warring cease?', 'Who will pioneer unity?' 38 albums (88%) preached on national integration and national development through music education.

Islam and Music Education

The introduction of Islam and Islam religion education in certain parts of Africa cannot be over-emphasized. In Nigeria, traces of Islam influence had been found in

certain parts of Kanem-Bornu Empire toward the closing decades of eleventh century. Islam influence has expanded in every direction in Hausa land and beyond from the fourteenth century to the present day, and has gained considerable ground. In the Muslim areas of northern and south-western parts of Nigeria, the Islam religion and ideology as well as Islam system of education underscore the structure and culture of society. The infiltration of Islam culture has been accompanied by the establishment of Koran schools in various parts of Nigeria for the teaching and learning of Arabic languages and music culture as well as the adoption of Islam musical way of life.

Islam education system in adopting the indigenous form of apprenticeship system is primarily concerned with pious musical socialization. Koran schools have not been made to interfere much with the people's socio-musical activities which have remained the socialization process, through which the Muslim internalize the norms, culture and beliefs of their society. Koran chanting and call to prayer remain important symbols of a distinctive Islam music culture acquired by all believers for communicating with Allah. Through the adoption of the indigenous apprenticeship system, indigenous concepts of music making have merged somewhat with a growing zeal for a musical heritage connected with Islam and shared by Muslim all over the world.

Fafunwa (1980, p. 20) states that Islamic music education has been able to achieve a smooth fusion with the indigenous musical life of the people in the preparation of music makers and takers who can imagine and value musical life in an African Islam world. It is both Theo-centric and socio-centric. It has engendered glaring, uninhibited rich traditions of music in all Islam Nigerian communities in spite of European imperialism.

CONCLUSION

The message of the Nigerian musician is clear enough for Nigerians to understand. This paper has shown the impact of music education in national development. The paper has argued that Nigerian musicians have contributed a great deal in moving the country forward through the help of music education. Music is dynamic and musicians in Nigeria have been using music through the knowledge of music education to transform Nigerians to promote sustainable democracy, political stability and national development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigeria's musical scene is full of young and old musicians. The younger generation of musicians is too playful as they always sing to entertain and praise people. Older musicians should try and redirect their orientation through music education so that they too can contribute meaningfully and musically to move Nigeria forward.

Many of the song texts of the younger musicians are full of vulgar languages. Their albums should be censored before they are waxed to check and prohibit wrong messages to the rest of Nigeria. More of Nigeria's albums should be played in Nigerian media houses rather than the media houses playing foreign albums. For any

national programme to be functional and relevant, it has to take into consideration the cultural heritage of people of which music is a part. Our nation should take cognizant of the role of music education in its attempt at nation building, integration and development. The significance of music education in a Nation's sustainable development cannot be over-emphasized.

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BIO-DATA

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